TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

Purposes of This Paper

The purposes of these papers are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church; finance, religious education, community relationships; and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The paper will be an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program," that will encourage a national "rural church movement." The paper will be closely linked with a regularly held National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country.

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This Issue

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Rural Laity Initiate Their Own Advance

ELIZABETH RHEA

• When a group of consecrated town and rural laity recognize the need and the lack of the Church's leadership in every phase of their community life, they put their faith in God and their hand to the plow, and will stop at nothing short of their vision. The zeal of the people of Brattleboro, North Carolina—St. John's Church—is shown in their story:

A sick baby of a family living on the outskirts of the village, died last Christmas Eve. Early the next morning—Christmas Day—the father, without anyone to help or comfort him, took the body of his child to the local cemetery, and there dug a grave and buried his baby. There were three clergy living in neighboring towns, any one of whom would have been most glad to come, but they did not know of the man and his trouble, and the father did not know any one of them well enough to ask him to come.

The Way of Defeat

This incident was the kindling point of the thinking of the village congregation. Fifty years ago St. John's Church had been organized. Brattleboro is a little farming village, surrounded by scattered farm families: some white, some colored; some owned by the families, some worked on shares. As a practical solution to the problem of clerical leadership for this scattered congregation, a financial arrangement with the nearby congregation of the Good Shepherd in Rocky Mount, made possible the part time services of their rector. As the years went by and Rocky Mount grew into a city, the rector's full time and energy were required by the one congregation. St. John's was left with only lay leadership and the services of the neighboring rector in times of emergency. The thirty-five members carried on with three services a month. It seemed that the mission was slowly drifting into quiet oblivion and decay because new life was not being added to its fellowship.

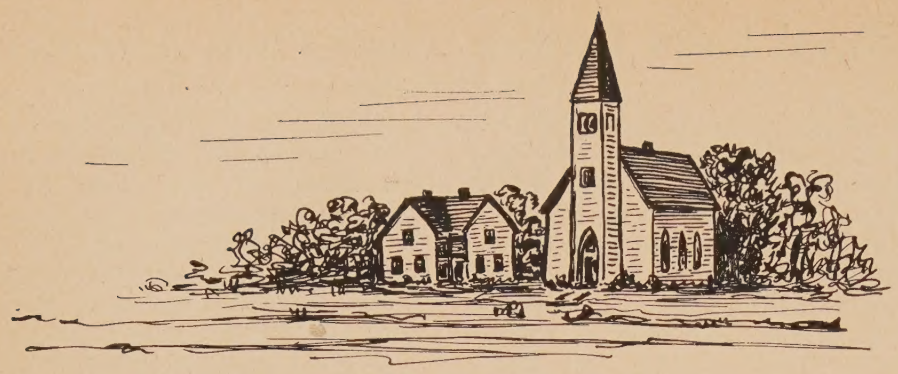
But now these loyal Churchmen were no longer content to drift—they sought immediate action. They had seen and were concerned with the apathy of the Church in their community—they saw it reflected in the gradual deterioration of the public school—in the way in which industry and community life lagged. They saw the need for some one to bind together the scattered peoples—in religion, in community service and in recreation. Just as with the Episcopal Church, the ministers of the local Baptist and Methodist Churches were resident in towns some distance away.

The People Lead

Determined to have a resident priest to serve the people of Brattleboro and also the unchurched men, women and children of the surrounding countryside, they went to their "Mother" parish of the Good Shepherd, the Rev. Gray Temple, Rector, for suggestions and help. The two vestries met together and took decisive action. St. John's raised its annual share of the stipend from $300 to $720 and Good Shepherd raised $1500 over and above its quota for this new work. The plan of action was presented to the Rt. Rev. Edwin A. Penick, Bishop of North Carolina, who gave them his official and enthusiastic blessing with the suggestion that their first step be to provide a suitable rectory. At a parish meeting pledges of $2500 were made; $4000 came as a gift from three girls who had had the influence of the Church in Brattleboro as children but who were now living elsewhere. A public barbecue with everyone in the town—Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, non-Churchmen—working together, added another $1000 to the Rectory Fund. Nor did the St. John's congregation cease their efforts until $10,000 was in the bank ready for use.

The Right Man

St. John's Vestry presented their plans to the Diocesan Executive Council and asked for a grant of $1000. The stipend of the new rector was set as high as possible ($3200,



covering salary, car allowance and Pension Fund) to secure the services of a capable man and to enable their priest to stay with them over a period of years. The grant was made and all the money put in the Diocesan Treasury so that the new priest will work directly under the Bishop.

The right man to be the new rector has not yet been found. Plans are under way for the erection of the new rectory. The congregation is looking for a man who has a vocation for rural work; one who can love and work with all types and classes of people, whether Episcopalians or not; and one who can assume the leadership of the community and be its spiritual pastor. They have faith that God will send such a man to them.

In such beginnings as these the Episcopal Church can and will reach and minister to the needs of rural people—if the Church raises and adequately supports a generation of men and women qualified by training, abilities and temperament to work with, live with, and serve rural people.

Ministerial Migrants

GEORGE E. CLARKSON

• It is one of the great American tragedies that we Protestants have not had longer and more secure relationships between pastor and people. It is the rural church, however, that has suffered most from frequent changes of pastors. Several times I have heard District Superintendents say that the time to "move up" is while we are young. When the question was once asked: "Well, what of the welfare of my church? It has already suffered too much from frequent pastoral changes." Then the answer was given: "You must never become so identified with the welfare of the local church that you cannot see your own future." Some of us entered the Christian ministry to think of the future of the church of Christ and not of our own future.

One of the most frequently cited reasons for pastoral changes is that we should move to a "better church." It seems to me that in most instances *there is no "better church" than the Better Church that is to be right where we now live.* There is no reward we should covet more in our ministry than some assurance that we can stay with those we love and for whom we are willing to give our lives. If we went into the Christian ministry only for the financial remuneration involved then our profession of the Christian faith is a farce and our church is but a mighty business institution.

Our Real Motives

Everyone counts supremely in the eyes of God. It does not make sense that because one group of persons (wisely) decides to live spread out over a wide area rather than inhumanly jammed up in brick canyons that they should be constantly penalized for their wisdom by having for spiritual leaders the newcomers, the inexperienced, or the "problem" men. And yet this is the deadly implication of any system which puts a premium on larger churches simply because they are larger, and fosters a spirit that deems any man foolish for wishing to remain where his work prospers.

Then, too, those who expect to stay only for two or three years in any one place can "afford" (if their ethics permit) to do a different kind of work than a man who expects from the outset to continue to live there a long time. Sometimes unethical and unChristian practises can creep into the church itself. It is a good thing, if our people can stand it, for us to have to live with our mistakes and not walk out on them. It's not too bad an experience. Others do it.

There are times when, not so much by our preaching as by our actions, we proclaim that in truth our hearts are in the city if only we could be put there! Insofar as that is true we are contributing to the fatal fallacy of our day that the best culture is in the mock civilization of the city. The real foundations of character and of our civilization lie in God's countryside. If we weaken the rural church, we weaken the whole structure of society.

Knowledge Comes Slowly

How anxious we are to see fine persons coming to our town to stay! Often I say, after visiting with them, "We hope you will settle down here." And then as I leave, I can hear some voice within me saying (as perhaps the newcomers say indulgently to themselves) "Why don't you practise what you preach?"

No strong rural community can ever be built up with migrants. How then can we ever expect to build up a strong rural church as an integral part of the community with the leadership of ministerial migrants? How can a migrant minister, moving every one or two or three years, expect to build up a rural community? Successful work in a rural community requires a thorough knowledge of the history of that area. Factions and cleavages, traditions,

THE PICTURE OF THAT SPECIAL EVENT WOULD HAVE APPEARED HERE, HAD YOU SENT IT IN.

nd deep-seated community feelings annot be understood over-night. Constructive work is dependent upon nany factors, but not the least of hese is a detailed knowledge of the ommunity in which we live that s built up over the years.

On Being Known

Only long pastorates enable one o know intimately the ups and owns of the parish families. It cerainly would be a great boon to work with young people if they did ot have adjustments to make to ew pastors every few years, affordng incidentally, an opportunity to eave the church when the minister eaves. Pastoral counselling, too, oes not function effectively with nigrant ministers. Few persons want o confide their spiritual problems n one whom they have not known ong. Building up the spiritual tone f a rural community is the slowest ind of construction work. It takes ime, but those "temples not made vith hands" are also the most enuring. The small church is not nade strong in a day.

We cannot do our task aright if we o not identify ourselves intimately vith the struggles of our people. No hepherd can look objectively at sufering sheep. Identification with the ull life of a people in any comnunity cannot be accomplished in short period of time; but this is specially true in a rural area where, n the whole, populations are more table. "He who is a hireling and not shepherd . . . sees the wolf coming nd leaves the sheep and flees; and he wolf snatches them and scatters hem. He flees because he is a hireing and cares nothing for the sheep. . . The good shepherd lays down is life for the sheep."[1]

Some Pointers

To be specific, at least these few hings should be done:

1. The "powers that be" should void using the rural areas as dumping grounds" for unfit minsters and should leave fine pastoral elationships undisturbed as long as ossible.

2. If any churches must be left "to be supplied," they should be those in larger centers where there are other churches available nearby. Isolated rural churches should have priority; they are in the all-important "feeder areas." There is already too much paganism being fed urban areas by neglected rural parishes. We are at present neglecting a vital source of the ministry—and reaping the whirlwind.

3. Every effort should be made, at once, to dignify the position of the rural ministry, including methods to make his salary adequate. Far from libraries, he must buy books. With parishioners, and ofttimes churches, widely spread out, driving costs mount severely over city conditions.

4. Let us exalt rural life, with our lips and with our lives! Let it never be said that we have forsaken God's way of life for us. Man made the city, but God made a garden and placed a man therein!

[1] John 10: 11, 12, 13 in the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1946.

Sermon Dust

• I Kings 12: 16—"To your tents O Israel: now see to thine own house David." Only a few generations back Israel had lived a nomadic existence with tents and herds their main possessions. Settled life had become unbearable because of heavy taxes and enforced labor. Verse 16 is a cry of defiance, the kind which thrills a commoner's heart. But the expression was one reverting to "the good old days." And this has never been successful. Years of chaos followed.

With the farmer receiving only one-third of each dollar spent for his produce, with taxes and regulations favoring commercially operated units, isn't it time for a cry of defiance? Not a reverting to pioneer ways but progress through cooperative ownership of means of production, processing and distribution. Are we headed for chaos or can we produce the leaders who, under God, will show us the more abundant life?

The National Convocation

• The rural churches of America are going places. The keen interest and deep devotion evident in those who attended the meeting in Des Moines speaks well for the future. There were nearly 1000 paid registrations with well over that number in attendance. At most general sessions there were people standing because only a few inaccessible seats were left, and this in an auditorium which would seat over a thousand.

Comments have been highly gratifying. One city pastor from Kansas City, after a session on the first day, said: "If I get nothing more from the Convocation than this session, it will have been worth while." Those who attended all sessions know that the door was just beginning to open. A rural pastor said, "This is fine. We ought to have five days of it." One of the Commission leaders said, "Everybody came expecting it to be a fine meeting but most agreed that it proved to be even better than they expected."

The January issue will be the special Convocation number. To those who could not attend, this will be an important issue. While an adequate report will be impossible, we will do our best to give a fair portrayal. A more comprehensive report, containing a digest of the main addresses and a summary of each Commission's report, will be printed. We hope it will be ready for distribution by late winter or early spring. If you registered, you will receive this report. If you did not register but desire a copy, please order it at once.

Another thing of great interest was the fine newspaper coverage given the Convocation. Our congratulations go to Miss Gene Phillips of the Public Relations Department of the Federal Council. The Associated Press and the United Press made daily reports. Many state, county and city papers carried these stories. Someone said, "It is the best publicity the rural church has ever had."

Our sincere appreciation to all the persons and organizations who assisted in this triumph.

Kneeling Down Upon the Earth

ETHEL BUNCE SIMONSON

"I believe He's coming now,"
Said the lamb unto the cow,
"For the Star has left the skies
And is shining on your eyes,
It is warm upon my fleece,"
Sighed the lamb in drowsy peace.

"I behold it," spoke the ass,
"Truly, it will come to pass;
Near a star, wise men have said,
We'll be found beside His bed;
Let us gather quiet round;
We shall stand without a sound."

Quoth the camel, tall and brown,
Quoth the camel, looking down:
"In the manger for today
We shall leave the fragrant hay;
Though it be a trifling thing,
It is good a gift to bring."

Crooned the dove, "With feathers light
I have strewn His bed tonight,
On the plumage from my breast,
He will find it warm to rest,
Little Lord must not be cold
When He comes within the fold."

Cried the ram with curling horn,
"Here is where He will be born!
Here, within this pleasant place,
We shall soon behold His Face;
Creatures, let us greet His birth
Kneeling down upon the earth."

—Reprinted from *Christendom*

• "A farmer, at his best, farms not to make money, but to feed people."
—M. R. ZIGLER.

Labor in a Small Town

• Most small towns do not recognize that any of their people could be identified with that mass reference, "Labor." And what is of more concern is that in most rural communities "Labor" is looked upon as essentially evil.

The August issue of the MENNONITE carried an interesting chart on the labor situation in a small (population 900) central Kansas town. Across the page in parallel columns were listed the kind of business, a column for each one. Down the page were the following divisions: Approximate volume of business, number employed, average weekly wage, extra benefits such as vacation, sick leave, etc., length of contract, Social Security, and attitude of employer toward labor unions.

Any pastor in a small town can do a similar thing. One call to each business should be sufficient. The resulting chart and information will help the pastor interpret his task and provide the basis for better community understanding.

The Southern Rural Church Leadership Training School

• The six-weeks' training school for rural workers which was started last summer at Valle Crucis, North Carolina, by the Episcopal Church was well attended by enthusiastic students. The school was organized by the Rev. A. Rufus Morgan and the Rev. C. L. Samuelson, with the financial cooperation of the National Council and the Diocese of Western North Carolina. The trial was so successful that a plan has been drawn up between this group and the Presbyterian Rural Church Institute of Warren Wilson College at Swannanoa, N. C., to have a joint school for a longer period of time next summer.

The program this year consisted of a two-week period of instruction and orientation which was followed by a month of field work, ending with three days of evaluation by the staff and students. Among the instructors were Dr. Ralph A. Felton of Drew Theological Seminary who gave a series of talks on the Rural Church; Miss Charlotte Thompkins of the National Council and Miss Maude Cutler of Virginia gave lectures and individual instruction in the preparation and running of Daily Vacation Bible Schools; the Rev. C. L. Samuelson pictured the position of rural work in relation to the work of the whole church; and lectures on the rural movement were given by the Rev. E. Dargan Butt and the Rev. A. Rufus Morgan. Students also had sessions with the County Agent and the Community nurse.

During the period of field work the students were organized into groups for community surveys, Vacation Bible Schools and Evangelistic Evening Meetings. For this work they were able to put the knowledge acquired during the first two weeks of the summer school into practice.

The program of evaluation was conducted by the Rev. A. Rufus Morgan at which time criticisms were offered and plans made for a bigger and better school for next summer.

Youth Week

• January 26-February 2, 1947 has been designated as "Youth Week" by the United Christian Youth Movement. The general theme for the week is "Youth Shares." It is suggested that the week open on the evangelistic task using the theme, "Youth Shares: The Christian Faith." During a week of special worship services, discussion forums, and social gathering in the individual church and on a community-wide basis, progression is made to a climax on February 2nd around the theme, "Youth Shares: The Christian Fellowship."

What a marvelous opportunity to consider the meaning and relevance of the Christian Gospel!

Of great interest will be the rewarding of the eight four-year college scholarships and the twenty-four U.C.Y.M. summer conference scholarships. For further information write

Miss Helen Spaulding, Ass't Sec'y, U.C.Y.M., 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois.

Town & Country Church

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"Country Men"

RALPH GRIESER

• To find a poet who can speak the down to earth language of a farmer is encouraging. And to find a farmer who like a poet wonders about the meaning of his experiences is exciting. What a happy combination we discover in the farmer-poet, James Hearst, who says:

tried to understand
As I scrubbed the rust from my brightening plow;
The movement of seed in furrowed earth,
And a blackbird whistling sweet and clear
From a green-sprayed bough.

James Hearst, plowing the fields of Maplehearst Farm near Cedar Falls, Iowa, as a college freshman had learned that the subjects for poetry come from the poet's own experience. Coming home each day to give a hand with the chores, he saw that a silo, a mad dog, a litter of pigs, or shaggy horses "whose bones are too big for their flesh" were for him legitimate topics for poems. Understanding that the youthful poet learned this lesson early we are not surprised as we turn to his *Country Men* to find such subjects as "Cows Bawl on Sunday," "When a Neighbor Dies," "Barns in November" and "Plowman."

The poet learned a second thing. He saw the struggle between man the worker and man the thinker. Two men stand before him: the proverbial man with the hoe and the man with the full soul. Characteristically he asked: How much of one's time should be left over for tasting the essence of things after the consuming desire to earn a living has chewed away at his hours? In "Belief" he tussels with the idea:

My neighbor and I have stood in the sun
And talked and left some work undone.

We could have spent the half of a day
If we were not busy, this pleasant way.

For seldom it is that we can see
Each other when we both are free. . . .

Looking back upon the day he created "Belief" he has said: "I read it as an argument between myself and the materialist in me who positively feeds on harder and faster work, more tractors, and bigger fields. And so I wrote this verse as a signboard pointing out a different road. It may not be all paved but it has more picnic spots than filling stations and you get to know the people."

We see in the third place that the poet is more than a writer of jingle-bell verse. Out of his experience he reaches for universal ideas. Like Emerson's "American Scholar" he is "Man Thinking." In this third view we find him thinking about the struggle between heaven and earth. Through an earthly title he tells a great issue of life. The title is "Cows Bawl on Sunday;" the poem is:

The image of God
In a warm mackinaw and rubber boots
Daily fights his way into the steaming barnyard
Into a multitude of hungry, angry, playful and determined animals
Through a cloud of raging sound
To bring order out of chaos.
Six times a week and rests not on the seventh—
And there fails his divinity.

James Hearst does not view rural America through the eyes of a vacationer touring the prairie from one state park to the next with reservations guaranteed by deposits. Rather, he stands in the stall and in the furrow. He holds the tools of farming in his hand as a craftsman. Yet, he is able to drop his tools long enough to ponder the deeper meanings and vision the wider horizons. Through him one finds more than the clammy hand of the mortgage or the covetous ghost of another forty acres. As he says: "It seemed to me that farm-life had never been looked at honestly—either it was sentimentalized or brutalized. I was trying to find out the truth."

The Bus Does It

• Four years ago the United Brethren Buck Creek Church—located 65 miles west of Madison, Wisconsin—was having an average attendance of about twenty-five people. Rev. Lester Mathews, the pastor, was not pleased. He began to look about for the reasons. He found that people close by attended but that many people miles up the valley never got to church. These people were within the community and the responsibility of the church. Somehow service had to be rendered so that they came into the watchful care of the church.

The public schools had solved the problem by consolidation into larger units but the larger unit demanded transportation. The Buck Creek Church wanted a larger unit—why not supply the transportation? Arrangements were made to use the school bus and now, after four years, the attendance has increased 700%. Everyone seemed anxious to send his children, and the children began to bring their parents. Rendering this service has won new respect for the church in this community.

This church is not to be lost to rural America. It set out to see that the people were not lost to the Kingdom, and the people have responded in a great way. Now the people are going to build an enlarged building, one comparable to its vision of service.

If you would like to consider the experiences of other churches in the operation of buses, purchase a copy of "The Church Bus" by Ralph A. Felton, 10c, from this office.

Leadership Training in South Dakota

LEILA ANDERSON

• "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?" These are words of wisdom uttered long ago, but they represent the feeling that leaders of today have many times as they do the work of the Kingdom. South Dakota leaders decided to do something about their need and this last summer shared in the following leadership training ventures.

Workshop

In July about forty people gathered at Lake Kampeska, near Watertown, South Dakota for a week of training in religious education. They were a representative group from North and South Dakota. They ranged in age from elderly people to those of high school age. Three Indian leaders came to secure help for their weekday religious education classes. Rev. Guy Buffalo, an Indian minister, was chosen as dean of the five men and became known as "Papa Crow," because the men lived in a part of the camp known as the "Crow's Nest."

Two leaders were brought in from outside the area to give to the group the benefit of their wide experience. The other leaders were local people who had proved their skill in some area of work. For most of them it was a new experience in leadership from which they gained confidence and skill. One of them said, "I thought I couldn't do it, but I knew I had to."

In seeing children taught people learned how to teach. In browsing periods they became familiar with the best in books, pictures, and lesson materials. In worship a sense of fellowship with God and man was strengthened. Creative activities acquired new significance as they were related to the lesson material. Each morning the group met for a "church meeting," where a brief presentation was given of some topic connected with Christian family life. This was followed by work in committees, after which the whole group met for reports.

Workcamp

Young people, also, are interested in taking training that they may be good workmen and do their share in spreading the message of the gospel. In June twenty-four girls from all over South Dakota came to Watertown to share in a week of training for teaching in Bible schools. Most of the girls were juniors or seniors in high schools; a few were teachers and college girls. Most of the work at the camp was done by the girls. Help was given them in making plans for worship, classes, recreation, and management of small schools.

At the end of the week the girls went out in teams of two each. A few were scheduled to teach in their home communities, but most of the girls went to areas that were new to them. During the following three weeks the girls helped in—or had charge of—thirty-three schools in small towns, country churches, country schoolhouses and Indian reservations. Over 400 children attended their classes. Five of the schools were Indian and one was a mixed school of Indian and white children.

The girls tell interesting tales of the events out on the field. Two of the girls had to move into a church because the weather turned cold, making it very uncomfortable to live in their trailer. Three others tried to drive at night on a wet gumbo road and finally had to try the open prairie. Telephone poles, seen by the flashes of lightning, kept them from getting lost in an endless expanse of tall, waving grass. Two girls tell about their car turning over when it hit a pile of gravel, without any-

one being hurt. In one of the schools, far out in the country, the families took turns in furnishing the noon meal for the teachers and children. Reports tell of the interest of the children in the "Life of Christ," of children who had never before used a Bible, of children who persuaded their parents to have "Grace" at the table, of interest in creative activities, and of closing programs in which the children led their parents in an experience of worship.

Local arrangements for the schools varied. The Indian schools were set up by the pastor-at-large of the state. In another area a church assumed entire responsibility for four schools, advertised them along with its own school, and took charge of the teachers during their stay in the community. In the other places arrangements were made with individuals or school or church groups. The local people were asked to provide board and room for the teachers. In some cases the local group had a girl who shared in the Workcamp and helped in entertaining the girls over the weekend.

The Results

What are the results? Who can say? Girls who knew little or nothing about country schools and churches, or Indian settlements, had the experience of living and sharing with older people in an environment which was new to them. They shared in a fellowship with each other which is continuing through correspondence and which gives support to living up to Christian ideals. Neighborhoods have been brought together in sharing a project of Christian training. Children have been brought closer to the Master through a study of the life of Christ. Some people have received a new vision of their responsibility for Christian training and some help on how to give such training. One mother said, "The children received more in one day of Bible school than we have been able to give them in several months of Sunday School." The following, quoted from a letter from a local minister, is typical of reports which have been received: "The folks were much pleased with their school at the church and the way the girls fitted into the homes in which they stayed. The mother who kept them on her davenport, and let them take her car and little girl to the church said, 'They surely picked us two nice girls.' The lives of children and adults were enriched because a group of young people cared enough to take training, and then give their time and effort to carry the message of Christ to those in need."

Young People's Retreat

In July two training camps were held simultaneously at Placerville Camp in the Black Hills of South Dakota—a local and state officer's retreat, and an Indian camp. The thirty-six officers came from white churches in South Dakota. The twenty-two Indian delegates came from Indian churches in North and South Dakota and Nebraska. The two camps held separate class sessions because their problems were not alike; but they shared together in work, worship, recreation and counseling.

THAT PICTURE OF YOUR CHURCH SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE.

Folk games proved to be an effective method of mixing the groups. Counseling was more difficult to manage. In the girls' dormitory the white girls moved over and sat on the Indian girls' beds in order to include them. In one of the counseling groups the Indian girls gave the white girls names, following the ancient custom of naming according to personal characteristics. Many of the Indian young people were not accustomed to being with white people. At first they would not talk but by the end of the period they had progressed to the stage of answering questions. The Indian young people who had attended public school had little difficulty in mixing with the white boys and girls. The latter found it difficult to understand that there was such a wide variation of background among the Indian group. One of the white boys asked one of the Indian boys who had attended public school if he would teach him to speak in Indian. He was surprised to have the boy reply that he could not use the Indian language well enough to carry on a conversation.

At the last campfire the Indian group had charge of a worship service. At the end a young Indian stepped forward and gave a few words of thanks. The president of the white group responded, and then the two young people exchanged wooden crosses as a symbol of their united fellowship in Christ. It was a great experience in which people lived and shared together as brothers while receiving training for their tasks as Christian leaders.

A Priest to the Temple

GEORGE HERBERT
The Parson in Circuit

• The Country Parson upon the afternoons in the week-days takes occasion sometimes to visit in person, now one quarter of his parish, now another. For there he shall find his flock most naturally as they are, wallowing in the midst of their affairs; whereas on Sunday it is easy for them to compose themselves to order, which they put on as their holyday clothes, and come to church in frame, but commonly the next day put off both. When he comes to any house, first he blesseth it, and then as he finds the persons of the house employed, so he forms his discourse. Those that he finds religiously employed he both commends them much, and furthers them when he is gone in their employment; as if he finds them reading, he furnisheth them with good books; if curing poor people, he supplies them with receipts, and instructs them further in that skill, showing them how acceptable such works are to God, and wishing them ever to do the cures with their own hands, and not to put them over to servants. Those that he finds busy in the works of their calling, he commendeth them also; for it is a good and just thing for every one to do their own business. But he admonisheth them of two things: first, that they dive not too deep into worldly affairs; but that they so labour as neither to labour anxiously, nor distrustfully,

nor profanely. Then they labour anxiously, when they overdo it, to the loss of their quiet and health; then distrustfully, when they doubt God's providence, thinking that their own labour is the cause of their thriving. Then they labour profanely, when they set themselves to work like brute beasts, never raising their thoughts to God, nor sanctifying their labour with daily prayer.

Secondly, he adviseth them so to labour for wealth and maintenance as that they make not that the end of their labour, but that they may have wherewithal to serve God the better, and to do good deeds.

Those that the parson finds idle or ill employed, he chides not at first, for that were neither civil nor profitable, but always in the close, before he departs from them; yet in this he distinguisheth; for if he be a plain countryman he reproves him plainly, for they are not sensible of fineness; if they be of higher quality they commonly are quick, and sensible, and very tender of reproof; and therefore he lays his discourse so that he comes to the point very leisurely, and oftentimes, as Nathan did, in the person of another, making them to reprove themselves.

Besides these occasional discourses, the parson questions what order is kept in the house, as about prayers, morning and evening, on their knees reading of Scripture, catechizing, singing of psalms at their work and on holydays; who can read, who not; and sometimes he hears the children read himself, and blesseth, encouraging also the servants to learn to read, and offering to have them taught on holydays by his servants. If the parson were ashamed of particularizing in these things he were not fit to be a parson; but he holds the rule that nothing is little in God's service: if it once have the honour of that name, it grows great instantly. Wherefore neither disdaineth he to enter into the poorest cottage, though he even creep into it, and though it smell never so loathsomely; for both God is there also, and those for whom God died. And so much the rather doth he so, as his access to the poor is more comfortable than to the rich, and in regard of himself it is more humiliation. These are the parson's general aims in his circuit; but with these he mingles other discourses for conversation sake, and to make his higher purposes slip the more easily.

Ministerial Origins

• Dr. Claude J. Snyder, Secretary of Town and Country Church for the Evangelical and Reformed Church, has made a small but interesting study of ministerial sources within his denomination. One hundred and fifty pastor graduates of E & R Seminaries since 1933 revealed that just over 50% had been born and reared in the town, village or open country setting; 56% had made their decision for the ministry during high school or before, and 68% had been influenced in this decision by their pastors.

Of the 102 seminarians who replied to the questionnaire 58% had been born in town, village or open country, and 63% had spent the larger part of the first eighteen years of their lives there. 60% of these had made the decision for the ministry during high school or before and only 48% were so influenced by their pastors.

Are pastors unconvinced of the importance of their profession?

Congregational Appointment

• At its June meeting in Grinnell, Iowa, the Congregational Christian Council for Social Action appointed Shirley E. Greene of Merom, Indiana, as Agricultural Relations Secretary. The appointment of Mr. Greene followed numerous requests for a rural secretary to work with farm organizations, to conduct regional planning, and to compile a brochure on the economic factors of rural life. Mr. Greene began this new work on November 1st and has already conducted an Industrial and Farm Conference in Vermont. He is planning to conduct a study tour through the Genesee Valley after Easter.

Since 1937 Mr. Greene has been director of Merom Institute, Merom, Indiana, a rural social project where problems of village unemployment, community health, soil conservation, bio-dynamic farming and library facilities are studied. His work as Agricultural Relations Secretary for the Congregational Christian Council for Social Action will not interfere with his work at Merom Institute.

For Joy in God's Creation

✠ O Heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty; open, we beseech Thee, our eyes to behold Thy gracious hand in all Thy works; that rejoicing in Thy whole creation, we may learn to serve Thee with gladness; for the sake of Him by whom all things were made, Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

• Sir John Orr, Director General of Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N., said: "I hope the Preparatory Commission will realize the need for quick action. . . . Things are not going well in international affairs. Already the fear of another war casts its shadow on mankind. But there must be no war, and if the nations cooperate on a world food plan based on human needs, there will be no war. We are racing against time."

• "I am all admiration for the many uncomplaining, faithful, sacrificial men and their wives now serving small churches, but I am convinced that their heroism could be used to a better purpose."

—*Walter S. Davison*